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ABSTRACT

These two manuals are designed to aid prospective providers of workplace literacy programs in program organization and implementation. The administrator's manual addresses the following topics: program philosophy, history, potential clients, advertising, guidelines for client meetings, instructor recruitment and training, client goals, learning workplace and job-specific vocabulary, pretesting, class size and materials, instructor-employer communication, posttesting, and potential problems. Forms and a student recognition certificate are provided. Topics in the teacher's manual include the following: teaching philosophy, student bill of rights, adult learner characteristics, manual design, helpful hints, and teaching techniques. (Contains 15 references.) (SK)

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ED 424 446

Workplace Literacy Program
Administrative Manual
Teacher Manual

Western Suffolk Bureau of Cooperative Education Services
Northport, NY

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WORKPLACE LITERACY PROGRAM

ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL

WESTERN SUFFOLK BOCES
Wilson Technological Center
152 Laurel Hill Road
Northport, New York 11768
(516) 261-5071
August 1998

PHILOSOPHY

The goal of the Western Suffolk BOCES Workplace Education Program is to enable workers to increase their literacy skills in reading, writing, mathematics, problem-solving, decision making and English proficiency for the purpose of functioning more effectively and efficiently in the workplace and the community, increasing productivity, enhancing promotability and the opportunity for continued employment. To achieve this end, a customized contextual curriculum will be generated for each workplace that is participatory, job specific, engaging and culturally relevant; it will draw upon the employees' life and workplace experiences and promote confidence, interpersonal skills and self-esteem.

HISTORY OF PROGRAM

In 1994, Western Suffolk BOCES (WSB), responding to the changing demographics of Long Island's entry-level workforce and employers' needs to better communicate with a limited or non-English speaking population, completed a request for proposal (RFP) to develop a workplace education curriculum to be funded for a period of 3 years by a grant from the National Workplace Literacy Program of the U.S. Department of Education. As stated in the RFP, "the overall goal of the proposed project is to provide participating employees with enhanced workplace literacy skills necessary to function effectively and efficiently on the job, ultimately leading to higher company productivity."

To accomplish this goal, WSB entered into a partnership with participating employers willing to provide on-site classroom facilities conducive to teaching and learning. Participation by employees was to be primarily on a voluntary basis and partly on company time. The RFP's initial objective was to provide basic skills training for 200 workers and more advanced training to 100 more.

Western Suffolk BOCES was awarded this 3 year grant which commenced in October 1994 and ran to October 1997 with a no cost extension through April 1998. In that time period new partners were added and the program served 28 employers and 1353 employees of which 526 participated in basic skills classes and 827 participated in higher ESOL, mathematics, reading, writing and other technical courses. Due to on-going demand, the program continues to run funded by other sources and open marketing is used to secure new partnerships.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL CLIENTS

Demographic studies have indicated an influx of immigrants who have found employment in entry-level jobs in such fields as hotel and hospitality, health care, manufacturing, and wholesale and retail trade. Often the work is menial and repetitive and comes without job security or opportunity for advancement. New technology and the change in the available workforce create a situation where employers must contend with employees who are unable to communicate with them or their customers and who are generally unable to follow instructions, learn different aspects of the business, master new technology, make decisions or solve problems. This is not to say that these people lack the intellect or ability. Often the problem is language deficiency.

In starting a workplace literacy program, it is important to identify business and industry that rely on this new workforce. Sources for this information include:

- business directories,
- industrial associations,
- trade publications,
- newspapers and other periodicals,
- trade shows and expositions,
- chambers of commerce,
- networking and
- schools.

Western Suffolk BOCES (WSB) initially relied on business directories put out by the Long Island Association and the Hauppauge Industrial Association, regional and industrial park associations that promote business and facilitate networking among member companies and business people. The most helpful of these directories listed the company name, address, phone number, human resource person if available and a brief description of what the company does. WSB targeted companies in the fields listed above. The marketing coordinator first sent an introductory letter directly to the human resource or other named contact person briefly describing BOCES services and the grant WSB received, and enclosed a brochure. She closed by giving her name and phone number for more information and stated that she would follow up next week. Diligently she did. She again described the program, highlighting its benefits and tried to set up an appointment. Today

cold calling, recommendations, networking, and trade shows remain the primary sources of new business.

HELPFUL HINT: WSB Marketing personnel attended many business seminars on topics relevant to obtaining new business and found extremely beneficial. Courses in cold calling, writing business letters, getting people to listen to you on the phone and networking were found to be very useful. In addition, WSB marketing personnel continue to participate in business to business after hours events that are designed to give your company exposure and promote networking.

ADVERTISING PROGRAM

Once potential clients are identified, advertising to generate awareness and interest in the workplace literacy programs begins. Initially, news releases announcing the awarding of the National Workplace Literacy grant, with a description of the intended services and contact information were sent to the area's major newspapers, all local periodicals, and local cablevision stations. Advertisements were also placed in pennysavers and other small papers and magazines. Fliers and brochures were given to industrial associations for distribution to member companies and for reproduction in their trade publications. In addition a videotape depicting the scope of the program was produced in multiple copies which is also given out for distribution to promote awareness of WSB's programs.

Examples of Western Suffolk BOCES promotional materials follow. Some important points to emphasize include:

- benefits to employers - better communication between workers and supervisors, employees and customers; reduction in errors and waste; increased productivity, improved stability of the workforce and retention of good workers; improved public image of the company; reduced time spent on translating or re-explaining; reducing conflicts among workers;
- benefits to employees - potential for promotion; more job security; more confidence; improved self-esteem; enhanced quality of life.
- benefits to customer - improved service; better product;
- contextualization - customize program and curriculum to workplace; industry specific skill development
- professional staff; academic plus business/industry background
- affordability - may be eligible for grant money.

INITIAL ADMINISTRATIVE / CLIENT MEETING GUIDELINES

Generally, the initial meeting is between your marketing coordinator and/or program administrator and the employer's human resource manager. On occasion, the employer has also involved his general manager, floor manager or supervisor, education director and/or budget chairperson. The main purpose of this meeting is to:

- determine the company's needs,
- define the company's responsibilities,
- discuss employee recruitment and skill development for personal growth strategy.

Determining company's needs:

Because contextualization is an important component of the program, it is very important to get an understanding of the employer's company and his goals for the program. This is also the time to take a tour of the facility and if possible, speak briefly to supervisors and workers to get a better understanding of what the employees do on the job. This is followed by determining the class schedule and what days and times will accommodate their needs. Remember to plan into the schedule time for skill assessment. Some companies provide release time, company time at the beginning or end of the day that is matched by the employee's own time. Classes could also be scheduled during lunch break.

Defining company's responsibilities:

Workplace Literacy is a partnership between your organization and the employer and as such the employer is responsible for supplying a room conducive to learning. Ideally this should be a quiet room large enough to seat 15-20 people at desks or tables. A black or white board is also highly desirable. The employer should also supply all business materials that will be incorporated into the curriculum, including extra forms for teaching and practice. Some companies go beyond the norm supplying other training equipment such as overhead projectors and TV/VCR's, purchasing workbooks, folders, paper and pencils for the students, providing xeroxing for the instructors, and sponsoring a graduation ceremony complete with awards and refreshments.

Employee recruitment strategies:

With attendance at most classes on a voluntary basis, recruitment of students becomes an issue. Companies have handed out fliers, posted notices and sign up sheets and had floor managers or supervisors speak to their workers. WSB has helped with the design of notices and supplied pamphlets. All methods of recruitment emphasize the following powerful incentives:

- paid release time,
- education taking place *in* the workplace,
- opportunity to learn new skills to become a more valuable employee which can lead to:
    - promotion,
    - increased salary,
    - better job security,
    - greater opportunities for their future,
- certificate upon completion especially when coupled with a recognition ceremony.

It is important to note that subsequent classes will also draw students based upon employee recommendation and evidence of accomplishment.

Whether or not a commitment to a class is immediately made, it is important to send a letter to your contact person thanking the person for their time and restating what was covered and agreed upon at the meeting. After the company agrees to sponsor the class, follow up with another letter confirming the days and time of the class, specifying the number of hours per week, number of participants, as well as the number of sessions the program will run. Include the instructor's name and carbon copy this letter to the instructor, and clients' file.

HELPFUL HINT: It is very important to keep a data record of all interaction with the employer. Start a client file and make sure the instructor is given copies of everything written so that there will be no misunderstanding as to what was agreed to prior to the commencement of classes.

RECRUITING AND TRAINING INSTRUCTORS

The success of Western Suffolk BOCES (WSB) Workplace Literacy Program was directly correlated to the high quality of its instructors. Paul Jurmo, Ed. D., in his "Final Report for Evaluation of WSB Workplace Education Program" said, "key elements of successful learning were the creativity, commitment and time of the instructors involved."

Instructors were recruited through advertising and recommendation. Qualities to look for included but were not limited to:

- prior ESL experience,
- prior workplace experience, familiarity with corporate culture,
- creativity,
- flexibility,
- willingness to do customized work at odd hours and
- previous experience working with adult population.

Ideally all candidates would possess all these attributes, however this is not usually the case. To aid and develop staff, WSB did the following:

- conducted initial training in principles and methods of contextualized learning (see attached curriculum of WSB's program),
- periodically held workshops in development of ESL curriculum, teaching techniques, class management, evaluation techniques, etc.,
- took advantage of telecommunication programs, taping and circulating them among the instructors for use at their convenience,
- maintained a library of resource materials and curriculum suitable for adaptation,
- held monthly meetings for all instructors to give updates, discuss problems, share ideas and curriculum and get peer feedback and support,
- encouraged observation of instructors by other instructors to pick up ideas on teaching techniques and class management,
- conducted on-site observation of instructors by the program administrator to be better able to give constructive feedback and evaluation.

Note: An unintended outcome of the workplace literacy project was the development of new expertise among the instructors through staff training and hands-on experience in the field. In the long run, everyone benefited from this - the students had more experienced instructors, WSB had a more knowledgeable, highly trained and experienced staff, and the staff had increased credentials that would transfer to other work situations.

IDENTIFYING CLIENT GOALS

The initial task of the instructor is to meet with the human resource manager of the participating company with the expressed goal of performing a job task analysis. During this process, more exact goals of the client are pinpointed. At this time it would be very beneficial to get input from the supervisors, floor managers and workers.

The following is a list of questions to serve as a guide in identifying what all parties expect to achieve from this program. Note that some questions apply to all people involved.

- What skills are needed to do this job effectively?
- Are there any new skills or knowledge that would help the workers improve or advance on their job?
- Are there any ways education could improve the quality of the employee's work life - make it safer, healthier, less stressful, more efficient, more satisfying?
- Are there any recent or anticipated changes in policies, technology or company organization that would require or be helped by education?
- Do the workers have the necessary skills to perform their jobs: can they read, understand, speak and write English; can they work as a team; can they use mathematics; can they solve problems?
- Do the workers understand and use their benefits and insurance; do they understand the payroll system, vacation and sick day policies; can they complete all insurance forms, call in sick, etc.?

Very often the workers have non-work-specific goals such as using an ATM machine and other banking procedures, using the library, comparison shopping, learning how to read and understand a medical prescription and how to administer medications, helping children with their schoolwork, understanding and completing a rental agreement, a loan and credit card application, etc.. It was found that these skills could be incorporated into learning activities and that employers and employees were happy with the results: more confidence, greater self-esteem, greater ability to communicate, increased interest in learning and greater incentive to practice and use all skills learned in class.

FAMILIARIZATION WITH WORKPLACE AND JOB-SPECIFIC VOCABULARY

Since the workplace literacy program is a contextualized job-specific program, it is very important for the instructor to become as familiar as possible with the worksite, job functions and related vocabulary. To this end, touring the facility and speaking to the floor managers/supervisors and workers would be most beneficial. Whenever possible, observe workers performing their jobs and ask questions. This will allow you to become more aware and accustomed to the environment. Sometimes this is not possible as it would be too disruptive, however any interaction, no matter how brief, will be helpful to the instructor. If a tour is not possible, speaking to the workers can be done during the first class or during the time scheduled for skills assessment. Make an effort to talk to the supervisors during their breaks.

Each job has its own specific vocabulary. Have the human resource person, working with the supervisors, compose a vocabulary list with the appropriate definitions and understandable examples. Be sure to clarify any words, concepts or procedures you are not confident teaching.

PRE-TESTING

Western Suffolk BOCES used the NYS Place Test and/or the CASAS Reading and Listening for Employability Tests as diagnostic tools to evaluate the workers' understanding and use of the English language and to group workers according to abilities. Testing was done during and after the normal work day usually by the person assigned to teach the course, often assisted by other WSB instructors as needed. Workers were assured that the results were confidential and used solely for placement and to give the instructor a starting point for the curriculum. BOCES policy states that test results are confidential and will not be seen by management.

HELPFUL HINT: Sometimes placement depended more upon scheduling than test scores so classes had to be heterogeneous. If that is the case, instructors have to be more attuned to boredom and frustration; however in classes with mixed abilities, very often the more advanced can be very helpful in the learning process especially when the instructor is not bilingual. The higher skilled learner gains in self-esteem, confidence and respect from their fellow workers.

OPTIMUM CLASS SIZE AND REQUIRED MATERIALS

It was found that optimum class size was approximately 15 students. This allowed for meaningful interaction and greater participation among students and instructor while enabling the teacher to maintain control of the class and flow of the curriculum. It also takes into account absenteeism and attrition while still leaving a viable class situation.

At the very least, the employer should furnish a learning-conducive environment, one that is free from noise and other distractions with good lighting and plenty of space to sit and write. Due to limits in the physical plant of the company, you might find yourself in less than ideal circumstances: space may be cramped, heat and ventilation not sufficient, etc.. Try to have the human resource person, at the very least, find a location that is relatively quiet and as free from traffic as possible. Equipment that would be very helpful includes:

- white or black board with plenty of markers, chalk and erasers,
- paper, pencils, rulers, markers
- folders for handouts,
- overhead projector,
- workbooks and other learning resources and
- access to a copy machine.

Helpful Hint: Workers often forget to bring their papers, workbooks and /or folders to class. It would be very helpful if the employer could provide an easily accessible storage space for the instructor's and the workers' materials.

NOTE: Western Suffolk BOCES tries to either provide the resources the employer can't or help the instructor work around the absence of materials. The national grant allowed for purchase of learning materials so WSB maintained a library of workbooks and manuals.

INSTRUCTOR / EMPLOYER COMMUNICATION

Before teaching begins, the instructor should discuss with the human resource director (HRD) the desired means of communication between themselves. Some HRDs will take a hands-off approach while others will want to be deeply involved. At the very least it is important to keep the lines of communication open so that potential or real problems or misunderstandings can be resolved quickly. Some HRDs will request attendance reports, want to sit in on some classes, monitor curriculum for relevancy. On the other hand, the instructor many need to confer with the HRD about absenteeism, uncooperative students or supervisors, students' problems, the company adopting a more proactive role in encouraging the use of English and other new skills in the workplace, etc..

NOTE: It is very important for the program administrator of your organization to maintain contact with the HRD on a frequent basis to find out how the class is going. Generally all will be fine and the HRD will be pleased with the attention, but sometimes there are problems such as instructor incompatibility, misunderstandings concerning the curriculum, or additional requests that the HRD would prefer to discuss with the administrator. The HRD should also be encouraged to feel free to contact the administrator whenever desired.

NOTE: An HRD may ask to see the results of the pre- and post tests which are confidential. Most times the denial of the request will be accepted as policy, but if a problem arises it should be referred to your organization's program administrator for resolution.

HELPFUL HINT: It is also a very good idea for the instructor to voluntarily make the effort to keep the HRD informed. A casual update on what you are covering, how the students are generally doing and how they are enjoying the class will help build a positive, friendly and cooperative relationship that will continue into the future.

POST-TESTING

Post-testing usually consisted of re-administrating the same, or if available, a different version of the test used in pre-testing. When this was not possible due to time restraints or inappropriateness of the testing vehicle, instructors relied on their own tests, observations or student portfolios for evaluation.

Very often test results were not a valid indicator of learning. Some of the obstacles to statistically significant testing were:

- Test anxiety, fear of failing,
- Fatigue, especially for those holding multiple jobs,
- Absenteeism,
- Short duration of instruction,
- Literacy,
- Tests were too general, didn't focus on particular skills covered.

It is important to note that although gains in knowledge were often not quantifiable, the independent evaluator of WSB's workplace program found that:

- Learners felt they understood more and were better able to communicate on the job
- Students were making use of their new life skills at home and in their communities
- Students expressed more confidence in themselves and their capabilities
- Employers demonstrated a new awareness of communications and support for adult education and reported a more positive attitude in their workplace.

WESTERN SUFFOLK BOCES ADULT EDUCATION ATTENDANCE REPORT

COURSE & NO. _____ TEACHER _____

LOCATION / DAY(S) / TIME _____ MONTH/YEAR _____

ADA

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE STUDENTS
DIVIDED BY NUMBER OF CLASS MEETINGS

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE = _____

*	DAY / DATE																												MONTHLY CONTACT HOURS	Y-T-D CONTACT HOURS
1																														
2																														
3																														
4																														
5																														
6																														
7																														
8																														
9																														
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14																														
15																														
16																														
17																														
18																														
19																														
20																														
	# OF ACTIVE STUDENTS																													

A = Absent D = Discharged N = New R = Readmit TI = Transfer In TO = Transfer Out

BOCES
Western Suffolk

WESTERN SUFFOLK BOCES
COURSE EVALUATION FORM

NAME OF COURSE_____ **DATE**_____

Please give a rating of 1 - 10 (1 = lowest and 10 = highest) to the following statements:

The course content was up-to-date. _____

The course provided practical information. _____

The course followed a logical outline. _____

The instructor(s) were knowledgeable in the subject areas. _____

The instructor(s) were well-prepared for class. _____

The instructor(s) provided enough time for questions. _____

The questions I raised were answered to my satisfaction. _____

The hands-on demonstrations provided a clearer understanding of the course. _____

Overall, I would rate this course a _____

Overall, I would rate the quality of the instructor(s) a _____

PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR OPINION ON THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

The sections of the course I liked the best were: _____

_____

_____

The sections of the course which need the most improvement are: _____

_____

_____

OUTCOMES FORM

OMB No.: 1875-0105
Expires: Nov. 30, 1997

1. Course Number: _____

2. Course Name: _____

3. Instructor's Name:

_____ (Last) _____ (First)

4. Name of Test or Assessment Measure: _____

5. Date Pre-Test Administered: |__|__|/|__|__|/19 |__|__| (Month / Day / Year)

6. Date Post-Test Administered: |__|__|/|__|__|/19 |__|__| (Month / Day / Year)

7. Is this assessment measure:

(MARK ONLY ONE)

01 ☐ A nationally-available standardized test?
02 ☐ A customized test?
03 ☐ A job-specific skill competency rating?
04 ☐ A monitored group or one-on-one interview?
05 ☐ Other (*Please Specify:* _____)

NAME OF LEARNER	PRE-TEST SCORE	PRE-TEST NOTES	POST-TEST SCORE	POST-TEST NOTES	IN THIS COURSE, WOULD YOU SAY THIS LEARNER PERFORMED:	COMMENTS
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	

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NAME OF LEARNER	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST		IN THIS COURSE, WOULD YOU SAY THIS LEARNER PERFORMED:	COMMENTS
	SCORE	NOTES	SCORE	NOTES		
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	

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OUTCOMES FORM (continued)

NAME OF LEARNER	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST		IN THIS COURSE, WOULD YOU SAY THIS LEARNER PERFORMED:	COMMENTS
	SCORE	NOTES	SCORE	NOTES		
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	
					(MARK ONLY ONE) 01 ☐ Above a satisfactory level? 02 ☐ At a satisfactory level? 03 ☐ Below a satisfactory level?	

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STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENT RECOGNITION

Formal recognition of a person's accomplishment is a motivating factor in workplace literacy programs. Every course should end with a special ceremony ideally attended by someone from the workplace program, the human resource director, and if at all possible, someone from the company's management team. Each student who attended the minimum required hours should receive a certificate of completion (see sample). Other suggestions for enhancing this ceremony are:

- refreshments,
- special awards (100% attendance, most improved, most dedicated, etc.),
- small gifts (mugs, pens, hats, T-shirts, etc.),
- short speeches of praise and encouragement by instructor and management,
- congratulation posters hung around company and/or printed in company's newsletter (use students names and pictures if available) and
- photographs of workers and the recognition ceremony.

HELPFUL HINT: A little bit of praise and recognition goes a long way to building self-esteem, confidence and a more positive attitude toward the workplace.

FOLLOW UP

Toward the end of the course, the marketing director should contact the human resource director to conduct a follow up interview for the purpose of determining how the company wants to proceed when the course ends. Issues to be raised can include:

- do you want to continue with a more advanced course?
- do you want to rerun this course substituting learners?
- would you like to introduce other work related courses - more ESL? more technical? leadership training? etc..

This would also be a good time to evaluate the course and discuss customer satisfaction. Work at building positive feelings as well as any improvements that would benefit their company. This will help strengthen your relationship with your customer.

HELPFUL HINT: If the overall result of this meeting was positive and enthusiastic, ask the company to become your program's advocate to the industrial community. Letters of appreciation and recommendations from happy and satisfied customers are great marketing tools for the future.

Western Suffolk BOCES

Workplace Education Program

Be it known that

has satisfactorily completed a course consisting of hours of training in

on this day of

Joseph D. Myers, Director, Occupational Education

Ciro J. Aiello, Assistant Director, Occupational Education

WILSON TECH

Instructor

BOCES Western Suffolk

152 Laurel Hill Road, Northport, New York 11768

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS AND ROADBLOCKS TO LEARNING

The road to a successful workplace literacy program is not always smooth. Along the way obstacles will present themselves. Some can be overcome, some you must just accept and work around. Examples of potential problems/roadblocks WS BOCES encountered are:

- worker overtime - sometimes overtime is mandatory; even if this is not the case, the opportunity to earn extra pay is a powerful conflict;
- workers needed to cover other jobs during class time - this could be a persistent problem especially if supervisors do not take the classes seriously or feel inconvenienced or put upon;
- cultural biases - male pride and machismo (men workers don't want to appear "weak" by participating in basic skills classes or by failing to know the correct answers) and females feeling they have to defer to men and not appear too smart;
- inability of workers to stay for classes - due to the need for a second job, lack of child care or transportation;
- fatigue
- for ESL learners, the lack of need to speak English - very often everyone the learner deals with on and off the job (family, friends, coworkers, store owners, ATMs, etc.) speak their native tongue;
- the need to unlearn before correct learning can take place - very common in mathematics classes;
- unsupportive company - fails to set goals for course, does not provide comfortable learning environment, often holds learners back from class, doesn't make changes to encourage or accommodate workers' new skills, shows little interest and lack of priority, loses enthusiasm for program for a variety of reasons and no longer feels it is worth the time and effort;
- unrealistic expectations for what the course can teach, what workers can achieve and how the workplace can change.

REMEMBER: Learning takes place in small increments. Be realistic and don't expect miracles. Don't become discouraged if the amount of measurable learning that has occurred does not meet your expectations. Most learners and workplaces are very grateful and appreciative for what the workplace literacy programs do accomplish:

- skills improvement,
- increased confidence and self-esteem,
- better communication within the workplace,
- better understanding of the workplace, its jobs and policies and
- a positive advocacy for adult learning.

WORKPLACE LITERACY PROGRAM

TEACHER'S MANUAL

WESTERN SUFFOLK BOCES
Wilson Technological Center
152 Laurel Hill Road
Northport, New York 11768
(516) 261-5071
August 1998

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

The Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) report states, "The most effective way of learning skills is "in context"; placing learning objectives within the real environment, rather than insisting that students first learn in the abstract what they will be expected to apply." SCANS also acknowledges a cultural bias in the competencies and skills it defines needed to succeed in the workplace in that these reflect the American workplace and therefore the American cultural concept of the world. It recommends the teaching of cultural skills as well as the oral language and literacy skills needed to learn the SCANS competencies and skills.

To this end, Western Suffolk BOCES (WSB) developed the following teaching philosophy for their Workplace Literacy Program:

> To teach a customized contextual curriculum - job specific, engaging, culturally relevant - based upon the workplace and life experiences incorporating the SCANS competencies and skills (chart listing SCANS competencies and skills follows);
>
> To teach in a professional manner that will promote self-esteem, instill confidence and enable learners to live and function effectively and efficiently in an English speaking environment at work and in the community.

A STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS

Every student has the right to be...

- respected and treated with dignity
- informed about the policies and procedures of the program
- assessed appropriately to determine needs
- provided appropriate instructional materials
- taught in a convenient location
- directed toward opportunities for success
- listened to when expressing concerns
- helped by a knowledgeable tutor
- consulted in the development of program goals and objectives
- recognized for all accomplishments.

Copied from:
"Making Literacy Work"
Judy Goodrich Catlett
The Kentucky Network, in
cooperation with the Kentucky
Literacy Commission and the
Kentucky Department of Education's
Division of Adult Education, 1998.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ADULT LEARNER

The adult student learns best in an active learning situation, learning by doing. Every student has a preferred learning style which allows him to understand and process information with the most ease. The following chart illustrates the seven perceptual styles, their characteristics and effective learning aids and experiences:

PERCEPTUAL STYLE:	CHARACTERISTICS:	EFFECTIVE AIDS AND EXPERIENCES:
Visual	needs to have a picture in mind; creates visual images while thinking	pictures, videos, television, books, photographs, charts, etc.
Aural	remembers and repeats what was verbally presented	lectures, audio tapes, recitations, anything perceived by the ear
Interactive	uses other people as a sounding board	group discussions, question/answer, role playing, etc.
Print	remembers what is read	reading, writing, written reports, etc.
Kinesthetic	learns better when moving about, uses hand movements to help concentrate and express thoughts	role playing, body movement, physical games and activities
Hepatic	needs to touch what is being learned, hands-on	painting, drawing, manipulating, arts and crafts
Olfactory	smells hold special significance, trigger memories easy to identify	odor discrimination, tasting

NOTE: Adult students are greatly influenced by past learning styles developed over a period of years. Not all students will respond to every style so it is important to incorporate as many styles as possible in your lessons to better reach as many learners as possible.

Adapted from:
"Train the Trainer Program"
Prepared by Paula Klee-Parish
Western Suffolk BOCES
Workplace Education Division
and
"Thirty Things We Know For Sure About Adult Learners"
Western Suffolk BOCES, 1981

MANUAL DESIGN

Included in this manual will be the following courses as taught by Western Suffolk BOCES under the National Workplace Literacy Grant:

- WPL/ESL for the Hotel Industry - Beginning Level
- WPL/ESL for the Hotel Industry - Advanced Beginner and Intermediate Levels
- WPL/ESL for the Manufacturing Industry - Advanced Level
- Basic Math for the Manufacturing Industry
- WPL for the Manufacturing Industry - Intermediate Level

Although each curriculum is presented somewhat differently to reflect the varying styles of the instructors, each course will consist of the following:

- Overview
- Objectives
- Source Materials
- Lesson Plans
- Handouts
- Course Evaluation Test, if applicable.

This format will enable future instructors to choose the presentation which they are most comfortable using. All of these courses can be easily adapted to other industries by simply changing the job-specific content and handouts. Indeed, it is recommended that these lessons be customized and contextualized to the individual job site.

HELPFUL HINTS

The following hints were culled from the instructors at monthly in-service meetings. They have been separated into four categories - trust, course relevancy, teaching techniques and potential problems - for easier reference.

TRUST

- Learn the cultural biases and backgrounds of your students to better understand the workers' learning behavior.
- Make eye contact with your students to establish confidence and trust.
- Address a fear that you hold in common such as the fear of learning a new language or making a mistake in front of others; this will help you make a connection with your students and show that you are in tune with them.
- Maintain a safe, non-threatening learning environment where praise and encouragement are the rule and ridicule and embarrassment not tolerated.

COURSE RELEVANCY

- Have company make available job specific vocabulary lists, company rules and procedures, insurance and vacation request forms. company parts and products, etc. for contexualization.
- Make your lesson materials incorporate life skills such as banking, shopping, getting medical attention, signing rental leases or credit forms, helping children with their homework, etc.. Experience centered activities are great motivators and facilitate learning.
- Integrate American culture into lessons. Celebrate American holidays as they occur on the calendar - learn the history, customs and special traditions. Plan a celebration during class time.
- Encourage students to go to American movies, rent American videos, take advantage of free concerts and museum exhibitions, attend fairs, etc.. This will help students integrate into American life and gain valuable experience in idiomatic language and American tastes.
- Reevaluate your curriculum constantly adapting to the needs of your students. Ask the learners what they want to learn, what they need to know.

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

- Lessons should use a variety of materials and learning aids. Make learning interactive to avoid boredom, build communication skills, encourage team work.
- Talk directly to group using conversational speech and mannerisms. Speak clearly, distinctly, slowly, loudly, and avoid a monotone voice. Use simple, clear and meaningful words and phrases.
- Give immediate feedback. Reinforce successful behaviors and accomplishments. Don't overcorrect; allow students to gain confidence in participating. As confidence grows, you can gently correct more grammatical and pronunciation mistakes and idiomatic expressions.
- Watch the faces of your students to see if they are hearing and understanding your material.
- Build redundancy into your curriculum - review helps to overcome problems related to irregular attendance.
- Segregate students by skill level wherever possible so that more advanced students aren't bored and more beginners aren't frustrated.
- Break up class time into different activities to maintain interest and appeal to different learning abilities.
- Use newspapers whenever possible to better integrate learning to current events and American culture.
- Set a pattern to your class, for example review previously taught materials, introduce new material, repeat and practice using various techniques such as drill, role playing, games. These patterns give structure to the class providing familiarity with and confidence in the learning environment while allowing for reinforcement and strengthening of skills previously learned.
- Keywords: flexibility and adaptability. Not all students learn the same way so it is very necessary to accommodate differences in learning skills. If another method works, go with it. Be creative, develop new learning aids.

Note: As you discover new methods and learning aids that work, add them to your own helpful hints page so others can benefit from your expertise.

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